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ABSTRACT

Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), the largest Federal aid-to-education program, was passed in 1965 to provide financial assistance to local school districts in planning and operating special programs for educationally deprived children. It is a supplementary program, designed to upgrade the educational opportunities of children from disadvantaged backgrounds, and not a general aid program. This booklet was prepared to answer some of the questions which are frequently asked about Title I programs operated by local education agencies. It does not attempt to deal with migrant education, or projects in institutions serving neglected, delinquent, or handicapped children. The contents are organized in seven parts: history of ESEA Title I eligibility of local education agencies; eligibility of children; eligibility of projects; applications for funds; allocation of funds; and records and reports. For more detailed information about Title I activities in a specific locale, interested persons should contact their State or Local education agencies. (Author/JM)

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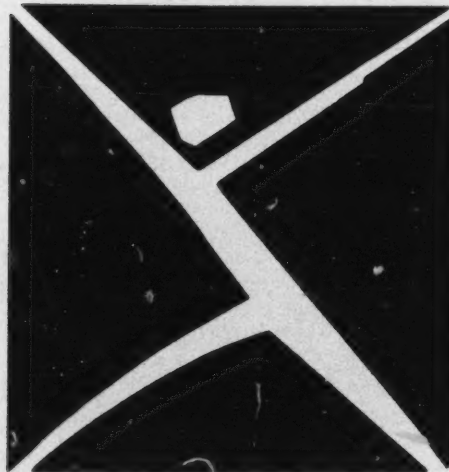
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS:

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Programs for Educationally Deprived Children

UD 013241

UNDER ESEA TITLE I

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS:

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
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PREFACE

Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, the largest Federal aid-to-education program, was passed in 1965 to provide financial assistance to local school districts in planning and operating special programs for educationally deprived children. It is a supplementary program, designed to upgrade the educational opportunities of children from disadvantaged backgrounds, and not a general aid program.

This booklet was prepared to answer some of the questions which are frequently asked about title I programs operated by local education agencies. It does not attempt to deal with migrant education or projects in institutions serving neglected, delinquent, or handicapped children, all components of the overall title I program. Separate question and answer booklets are available for both the migrant and the neglected and delinquent programs from the Division of Compensatory Education, Bureau of Elementary and Secondary Education, U.S. Office of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., Washington, D.C. 20202.

For more detailed information about title I activities in a specific locale, interested persons should contact their State or local education agencies.

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HISTORY OF ESEA TITLE I

When was the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) passed?

April 1965.

What is the intent of title I of the Act?

To expand and improve elementary and secondary school programs for educationally deprived children in low-income areas.

Has ESEA title I been amended?

Yes, in 1966, 1968, and 1970.

What was involved in the 1966 amendments to title I? the 1968 amendments? the 1970 amendments?

In November 1966, Public Law 89-750 amended title I by providing for the inclusion of Indian, migrant, and institutionalized children in the program. Public Law 90-247, passed in January 1968, made a number of administrative revisions in the program. In April 1970, Public Law 91-230 provided for bonus payments to teachers under title I, authorized special grants for States exceeding the national effort in public elementary and secondary education and for local districts with high concentrations of poor children, and required school districts to equalize services between title I and non-title I schools.

How many children have been served through title I projects?

In fiscal year 1966, about 8.3 million children participated in title I projects; in fiscal year 1967, slightly more than 9 million; in fiscal year 1968, about 7.9 million; and in fiscal year 1969, the last year for which statistics are available, 7.9 million.

What funds have been allotted thus far under title I for local education agencies?

In fiscal year 1966, \$1,164,529,100; in 1967, \$1,015,152,657; in 1968, \$1,100,287,599; in 1969, \$1,020,438,980; in 1970, \$1,219,165,528; and in 1971, \$1,300,041,628.

How many school districts have title I programs?

Nearly 16,000. Some 5,000 districts with enrollments below 300 and 10,980 districts with 300 or more pupils participate in title I.

How long will title I be in effect?

Public Law 91-230 extended the titles of ESEA through June 30, 1973.

ELIGIBILITY OF LOCAL EDUCATION AGENCIES

What is a local education agency (LEA)?

A public board of education or other public authority legally responsible for providing public elementary and secondary education in a city, county, township, school district, or other political subdivision of a State.

Which LEA's are eligible to receive title I funds?

Any LEA in a county which has at least 10 children, aged 5 to 17, in one or a combination of four categories: (1) children in resident families with an annual income below the low-income factor; (2) children in families with an annual income above the low-income level who receive Aid for Families with Dependent Children (AFDC); (3) children in local institutions for the neglected or delinquent; and (4) children living

in foster homes and being supported by public funds.

What is the low-income factor used in determining the allocation of funds under title I?

Theoretically, \$4,000. However, for practical purposes \$2,000 is used, because appropriations do not yet equal the maximum amount authorized using the lower factor.

Who determines which LEA's are eligible for title I aid?

The U.S. Commissioner of Education, on the basis of data provided by the Bureau of the Census and other sources.

Are nonpublic schools eligible to receive grants?

Nonpublic schools may not receive title I funds. But educationally deprived children who attend these schools and live in eligible public school attendance areas must be provided with services comparable to those of eligible public school students.

Are community action agencies eligible for grants?

No, because they lack the legal responsibility for providing public education. However, LEA's are urged to consult community action groups when determining priorities for a title I program.

ELIGIBILITY OF CHILDREN

Who may receive title I services?

Any educationally deprived child living in an attendance area with an above-average concentration of children from low-income families.

Who is an educationally deprived child?

A child who needs special educational assistance to perform at the grade level for his age. The term also includes children with special educational needs resulting from poverty, neglect, delinquency, handicaps, or cultural, economic, ethnic, or linguistic isolation from the general community.

Are title I services limited to children from low-income families?

No. Low income is one of the factors used in determining the eligibility of a school district and selecting target areas, but educational deprivation is the sole criterion for participation in title I.

Must children reside in the school district where a title I project is being held in order to participate?

Usually, yes. But nonresident children may participate if there is room for them.

May any educationally deprived child, regardless of race, color, or national origin, participate in title I activities?

Yes. LEA's must sign the Assurance of Compliance with title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Title VI prohibits discrimination in any activity receiving Federal financial assistance.

Only children aged 5 to 17 are counted in determining an LEA's title I allocation. Does this mean that title I services are limited to children in this age bracket?

No. Any educationally deprived child in an elementary or secondary school with a title I project may receive title I services. For example, title I may fund a preschool project for children under the age of 5 or a dropout prevention project for youth up to 21 years.

Do all eligible children actually receive title I services?

No. School districts receiving title I funds are urged to concentrate their services on target areas with the highest concentration of children from poor families.

ELIGIBILITY OF PROJECTS

What is a title I project?

One or more activities designed to meet the special needs of educationally deprived children in a local school district.

Who has the authority to approve local title I projects?

The State education agency (SEA).

What is the fiscal year for title I projects?

From July 1 through June 30. Funds not used may be carried over into the next fiscal year.

What types of projects should be proposed?

Projects should be designed to meet the particular educational needs of the children being served. They should be of sufficient size, scope, and quality to give promise of substantial progress toward meeting these needs.

What are some of the ways in which title I funds may be used to provide services for educationally deprived children?

—Remedial instruction in reading and mathematics to upgrade the achievement level of children who are below grade level in these subjects.

—Additional teachers and teacher aides to provide more individualized instruction for title I children.

-Summer programs which enable students to retain and reemphasize material learned during the regular term and also to provide cultural enrichment opportunities.

-Inservice training for teachers and aides.

May project funds be used for any purpose other than instruction?

Auxilliary services, such as food, medical and dental services, and clothing, are authorized under title I. However, funds may be expended for these purposes only when all other resources have been exhausted and only on the basis of individual need. In addition, such services must be an integral part of a title I educational program.

Must parents be involved in a title I project?

Yes. Parental involvement has always been a requirement of title I, but such involvement was not part of the law until 1970.

What provisions were made for parental involvement in the 1970 ESEA amendments?

Public Law 91-230 gave the Commissioner of Education the power to mandate parental participation at the State and local level if he felt such involvement would increase the effectiveness of a program. The Commissioner has indicated that such involvement is essential to the success of title I.

How are parents involved in a title I project?

Each school district must have a system-wide council composed of a majority of title I parents. The council participates in the planning, operation, and evaluation of the district's title I program. The Office of Education has also recommended that

parent councils be organized at each title I school.

What responsibilities does the LEA have to the parent council?

It must provide the council with all the information it needs to function effectively, establish specific means for answering the questions of parents, and indicate the council's views in the title I application.

Must a local school district, using State and local resources, provide comparable services at title I and non-title I schools?

Yes.

Is this comparability requirement new?

No. The original regulations prohibited LEA's from using title I funds as a substitute for State and local funds. Title I funds are meant to supplement, not supplant, non-Federal resources. A provision in Public Law 91-230 specifically requires comparable services in title I and non-title I schools.

What is meant by comparable services?

Although schools are not compared on a service-by-service basis, a title I school must have equal or lower staff-student ratios and equal or higher per pupil expenditures than the average non-title I school serving the same grade level.

May a project in a district not meeting the comparability requirement be approved?

Beginning July 1, 1972, no.

May a State education agency decrease its aid to an LEA because the district receives title I funds?

No.

May an LEA use title I funds to continue a project that has previously been financed by State and local money?

Yes, provided the project meets the title I criteria and does not result in a reduction of State and local effort in the title I school.

May title I funds be used for construction?

No, unless such construction is essential to insure the success of a project which meets the requirements of title I.

May title I funds be used to rent a building or portion of a building owned by the LEA?

No.

May title I funds be used to rent facilities not owned by an LEA?

Only if the space available in existing school buildings is inadequate for the proposed project.

May title I funds be used to purchase equipment?

Yes, if the equipment is needed for a title I project and is acquired at a reasonable cost. The applicant must demonstrate that the equipment is essential to the project.

May funds be used for preschool programs?

Yes. However, the preschool program must be educationally oriented, not just a babysitting service.

May title I funds be used to pay teachers' salaries?

Yes. In addition, a clause in Public Law 91-230 specifically allows local school districts to use title I funds to provide "bonus payments" to teachers who work in schools with high concentrations of children from low-income families. These payments should

be used to attract and keep good teachers in title I schools.

APPLICATIONS FOR FUNDS

Where can an LEA obtain title I applications?

From the State education agency.

What is the deadline for submitting title I applications?

The date is set by the SEA and may vary from State to State.

May projects be approved for more than 1 year?

No. Congress allocates title I funds for each fiscal year and new applications must be submitted annually. However, the same project may be continued if it is approved again.

May two or more LEA's file a joint title I application?

Yes, if each agency is eligible for title I funds and agrees to the cooperative arrangement.

What assurances must an LEA include in its title I application?

A number of assurances are required:

—That the public education agency will maintain control over title I funds and retain title to any property purchased with such funds;

—That the applicant will submit an annual report and other periodic reports that may be required to the State education agency;

—That the project complies with the requirements of title VI of the Civil Rights Act;

-That services provided with State and local funds in title I schools will be maintained at a level comparable to those provided in non-title I areas;

-That the amount of State and local funds in project areas will be maintained at levels no lower than the levels that would exist if the areas did not receive title I services; and

-That when construction is approved, it will begin within a reasonable time and be completed diligently, that the wages for laborers and mechanics will be equivalent to local rates for similar work, and that the applicant will comply with the rules and orders of the Secretary of Labor for projects receiving Federal financial assistance.

What role do performance criteria have in title I applications?

Title I requires the inclusion of performance criteria in an LEA's application. These criteria are then used to evaluate the impact of the program on participants' educational achievement.

Are title I applications available to the public?

Yes.

ALLOCATION OF FUNDS

Who determines the maximum amount of funds allocated to eligible counties?

The U.S. Commissioner of Education.

How are maximum allocations for title I computed?

One-half the national or State average per pupil expenditure, whichever is higher, is multiplied by the total number of children

aged 5 to 17 in four categories; (1) children in families with an annual income below \$2,000; (2) children in families with an annual income above \$2,000 who receive Aid for Families with Dependent Children (AFDC); (3) children in foster homes supported with public funds; and (4) children in local institutions for the neglected or delinquent.

How are title I funds distributed?

The Office of Education allots funds on a formula basis. Each State education agency is notified of the amount each of its counties is eligible to receive. The SEA then suballocates the funds to local education agencies within the counties.

How does a State suballocate title I funds?

On the basis of the best available data which reflect the current distribution of children from low-income families. The data may include census income and housing statistics, Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) records, and health, employment, or free lunch statistics. The data may be combined on a weighted basis if necessary.

Must funds granted for a fiscal year be committed within that year?

No. A clause in the Elementary and Secondary Education Amendments of 1970 authorizes State and local education agencies to retain title I funds not committed during the current fiscal year for use through June 30 of the following fiscal year. Until this amendment was passed, title I funds could be used only until August 31 following the end of the fiscal year for which they were allotted.

May funds be withheld from a State or local education agency?

Yes, if after the SEA or LEA is notified and given an opportunity for a hearing, the U.S. Commissioner of Education finds that it has failed to carry out the assurances contained in its application to participate in the title I program.

What portion of an LEA's allocation may be used for bonus payments to teachers?

Bonus payments are not required, and there is no maximum percentage that may be paid. Teachers, however, must serve as an integral part of the title I project, and LEA's must indicate that the bonuses are needed to attract and retain high caliber teachers in title I schools.

Are title I funds available for special incentive purposes?

Yes. The original legislation provided for incentive payments, but this clause was never implemented. The 1970 amendments to title I include a new provision for incentive grants to States exceeding the national effort index in elementary and secondary education (part B).

How is the national effort index computed?

The sum of all expenditures from non-Federal sources for elementary and secondary education is divided by total personal income in the 50 States and the District of Columbia. Statistics from the Department of Commerce are used in computing the ratio.

What is the maximum amount a State education agency can receive as a special incentive grant?

The State may get up to \$1 per eligible child for each one-hundredth of a percent by

which it surpasses the national effort index. However, the amount cannot exceed 15 percent of the total available under part B.

How many States may receive incentive grants?

In fiscal year 1971, the 1st year in which funds were available for this purpose, 28 States were eligible.

How much money is available for incentive grants?

In fiscal year 1971, \$6,304,637.

Are there any other types of special grants available under title I?

Yes. Public Law 91-230 also authorizes special grants for urban and rural school districts with high concentrations of poor children (part C).

Which LEA's may receive these special grants?

At least 20 percent of the district's population, aged 5 to 17, must be from low-income families, or at least 5,000 children and 5 percent of that age bracket must be in the poverty count. A maximum grant under part C cannot exceed 40 percent of the district's regular title I allocation.

How much money is available for special grants to districts with concentrations of poor children?

In fiscal year 1971, the 1st year such grants were authorized, \$15,440,250.

Most LEA's receive Federal funds for education under a variety of programs. Does this affect the amount they can receive under title I?

No. However, title I funds should be coordinated with other Federal and local efforts to avoid duplication of services.

RECORDS AND REPORTS

What records must a grantee keep?

A State or local education agency must keep records related to applications for Federal funds, including evaluations of programs, expenditures of funds, and inventories of equipment.

Are such records public information?

Yes, unless they refer to student or teacher performance by name.

What reports must a grantee make?

The LEA is required to make annual evaluation and fiscal reports to the SEA. The SEA must, in turn, file similar reports with the Office of Education.

For further information:

Contact the State or local title I coordinator
or
Division of Compensatory Education
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